

SENATE BILL 296

By Johnson

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 3,
Chapter 1 and Title 8, Chapter 44, relative to open
meetings.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 8-44-102(b)(1), is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated subdivision:

() The general assembly as well as the senate, house of representatives or any joint committee, standing committee, statutory committee, special committee, select committee, oversight committee, ad hoc committee, or any other committee or subcommittee thereof.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 8-44-102(b)(2), is amended by adding the following language at the end of the subdivision:

With respect to meetings conducted by the general assembly, senate, house of representatives or any joint committee, standing committee, statutory committee, special committee, select committee, oversight committee, ad hoc committee, or any other committee or subcommittee thereof, the term "meeting" does not include discussions among the members of any such body unless a quorum of the body is present during such discussions.

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 8-44-102(a), is amended by adding the following language at the end of the subsection:

Provided, however, the authority of Article II, Section 22 of the Tennessee Constitution which requires committees of the whole of each House to be kept open unless "the business shall be such as ought to be kept secret" shall not be construed as applying to

individual standing committees of the house or senate or subcommittees of a standing committee or ad hoc committees of the general assembly as such committees, standing or ad hoc committees are not committees of the whole; and provided further that the authority of Article II, Section 12 of the Tennessee Constitution giving the general assembly "all other powers necessary for a branch of the Legislature for a free State," shall not be construed in any manner to permit a standing committee of the house or senate or subcommittees of a standing committee or ad hoc committees of the general assembly created by a specific house of the general assembly to hold meetings that are not open to the public at all times. A general assembly shall not exempt itself from the provisions of this section except by adoption of a rule that specifically permits meetings to be held that are not in compliance with this section.

SECTION 4. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 3-1-118, is amended by deleting the section in its entirety.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.